

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KINSHA 02496 191451Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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O 191300Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2440

S E C R E T KINSHASA 2496

NODIS

FOR SHAUFELE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, PINR, CG

SUBJECT: MERCENARIES

REF: KINSHASA 2474

1. YOU WILL HAVE NOTICED THAT THE REFERENCED MESSAGE RAISED THE POSSIBILITY THAT MOBUTU MIGHT CALL IN MERCENARIES. I DID SO BECAUSE I HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE IT IS IN THE CARDS. FIRST OF ALL, KNOWING THE HISTORY HERE, YOU CAN APPRECIATE THAT MOBUTU'S LOGIC WOULD RUN IN THAT DIRECTION, ESPECIALLY SINCE HE KNOWS THAT HIS WESTERN FRIENDS WILL NOT SEND TROOPS. I WOULD ALSO POINT OUT THAT FROM THE FIRSTNEWS OF THE ATTACK MOBUTU LABELED THE INVADERS AS MERCENARIES THUS LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR AN EVENTUAL GOZ HIRING OF SAME.

2. SECONDLY, WE HAVE RECEIVED SEVERAL INDICATIONS THAT SUCH A RECOMMENDATION HAS BEEN PUT TO HIM BY SOME OF HIS ADVISORS. THEN, TEMPLESMAN TOLD ME THAT MOBUTU INDICATED TO HIM THAT HE WAS THINKING OF BRINGING IN FRENCH MERCS UNDER GECAMINE COVER. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR HERE CAME CLOSE TO CONFIRMING THIS, EXPRESSING CONVICTION THAT MERCENARIES WOULD BE ESSENTIAL TO DEFEND THE SHABA.

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3. LASTLY, AT THE END OF MY MEETING WITH MOBUTU ON MAR 18-- DURING WHICH HE ASKED ME TO ASSURE PRESIDENT CARTER THAT HE WOULD NEVER REQUEST US TROOPS--MOBUTU MADE A RATHER VAGUE REFERENCE TO THE DIFFERENCE IN HIS MIND BETWEEN FOREIGN GOVERNMENT TROOPS AND PRIVATELY HIRED MERCENARIES. I DID NOT PICK UP THE BAIT, AND INSTEAD LIMITED MY RESPONSE TO RECALLING

THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION OF MERCENARIES HAD BEEN QUITE
CONTROVERSIAL DURING THE ANGOLAN WAR.

4. I FLAG THIS TO YOUR ATTENTION BECAUSE OF THE OBVIOUS POLICY
COMPLICATIONS IT COULD POSE FOR US. IN REFTTEL I RECOMMENDED
THAT WE MOVE AHEAD NOW WITH LIMITED M-16 AMMUNITION SUPPLY BUT
BE PREPARED TO MAKE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR TO MOBUTU THAT
IF MERCENARIES ARE IN FACT USED, WE COULD NOT ALLOW THEIR HAVING
ACCESS TO ANY US SUPPLIED ARMS. WHILE I REALIZE APPLICATION IN
THE FIELD MIGHT PROVE DIFFICULT, THIS WOULD SEEM TO PROVIDE
US WITH A DEFENSIBLE POSITION ON THIS ISSUE FOR THE DELIVERY OF
M-16 AMMUNITION AND WHATEVER OTHER ARMS WE MIGHT EVENTUALLY
DECIDE ON.

CUTLER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

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